

EXCHANGE

NEWS OF ELECTRONIC HEALTH TECHNOLOGY FROM ALASKA AND BEYOND

AEHN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Sherry

President, AeHN

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Jerome List, MD

Vice President, AeHN

Alaska EHR Alliance

J. Patrick Luby

Secretary, AeHN

AARP Alaska

Garth Hamblin

Treasurer, AeHN

Bartlett Regional Hospital

Jeff Davis

Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska

William Streur

Alaska Department of Health
& Social Services

Marilyn Kasmar

Alaska Primary Care Association

Tom Nighswander, MD

Asst. Regional Dean, WWAMI Program

Stephanie Morton

Providence Health & Services Alaska

Karen Perdue

Alaska State Hospital
and Nursing Home Association

Alex Spector

Alaska VA Health Care System

James Yarmin

Yarmin Investments

Jan Harris

University of Alaska Anchorage

STAFF

William Sorrells

Executive Director

President's Update



While fall is turning quickly to winter, our AeHN team has been very busy. I'm excited to report the acceptance testing of the first phase for the health information exchange (HIE) went exceptionally well. Clinicians, IT support staff and others from Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, Tanana Valley Clinic and Tanana Chief's Clinic participated in testing of the HIE clinical portal...the most important service our HIE will have. The feedback was very positive, and participants were excited with the service and the ability to see data shared by all three healthcare organizations. Working with the State of Alaska/DHSS, AeHN will soon be moving forward to allow other healthcare organizations to participate in health information exchange...one of the key elements helping hospitals and physicians achieve Meaningful Use, thereby allowing them access to significant Medicaid or Medicare financial incentives. For questions regarding the HIE, contact AeHN's Executive Director, Bill Sorrells (bill@ak-ehealth.org) or Health IT Director, Joseph Furrer (joe@ak-ehealth.org).

The AeHN Regional Extension Center (REC) is also working tirelessly to reach

out to qualifying physicians and rural/critical access hospitals to take advantage of a federal grant to help them adopt electronic health records (EHR) certified for Meaningful Use. With over 300 primary care providers and hospitals in Anchorage, Juneau, Sitka, Petersburg and Homer signed up, we're hoping more will join AeHN and receive \$3,000 for qualified providers and \$18,000 for qualified hospitals in valuable technical services. Time is running out, and the grant opportunity will soon end. Your AeHN team is dedicated to provide direct services to support healthcare organizations succeed in achieving Meaningful Use. Contact Jim Landon (jim@ak-ehealth.org) for more information on how to take advantage of the program.

I'm happy to announce Erin Edin (erin@ak-ehealth.org) has joined our AeHN REC team. Erin is familiar to healthcare organizations in Anchorage, and will be helping physician practices with direct technical services including workflow planning and redesign, needs assessments and vendor selection for EHRs.



Paul Sherry
President

AeHN Welcomes New Members

Welcome to more than three dozen practices, clinics, and hospitals which have joined AeHN's network since our summer newsletter report. Be sure to check out the benefits of membership below!

- Alaska Family Doctor
- Alaska Family Health and Birth Center
- Alaska Island Community Services
- Alaska Medical Clinics
- Alaska Medicare Clinic, Inc.
- Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center
- Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Center of Alaska, LLC
- Alyeska Family Medicine, Inc.
- Aurora Women's Health Care
- Bartlett Regional Hospital
- Camai Community Health Center
- Capstone Family Medicine, LLC
- Chena Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Cross Road Medical Center
- Denali Ob-Gyn Clinic
- Mary P. DeMers, D.O.
- Dr's deSchweinitz, Moore, and Trujillo
- Family Medicine of Alaska, Inc.
- Family Practice Physicians, Inc.
- Generations Medical Center
- Glacier Pediatrics
- Dr. David Grauman
- Independence Park Medical Services
- Interior Community Health Center
- KBH Management Group, LLC
- Catherine Kilby, MD
- Kodiak Community Health Center
- Mat-Su Health Services
- Mat-Su Midwifery, Inc.
- Mayer Clinic, Inc.
- Julie McCormick, MD, LLC
- Peninsula Community Health Services of Alaska
- Rainforest Pediatric Care
- Sitka Community Hospital
- Southeast Medical Clinic
- South Peninsula Hospital
- Steward Family Medicine

AeHN has experienced unprecedented member growth, and a limited number of organizations will be eligible for future incentivized technical services. Eligible primary care practices and clinics joining AeHN from now through February 2012 can receive up to \$3,000 per provider in practice services (\$30,000 cap). A modest one-year membership fee of \$100 per provider is due at the time the member agreement is signed. Similarly, eligible Critical Access and Rural Hospitals joining during this time period can receive up to \$18,000 in technical services. One year membership cost is \$1 per every \$10,000 in gross patient services revenue. Services include readiness assessment, workflow re-design, IT support, training, and more.

AeHN Regional Extension Center Offers Local Support



Jim Landon
REC Director

AeHN's REC is now offering technical services with an "Alaskan boots on the ground presence" no matter where a practice, clinic, or Critical Access /

Rural hospital is on the EHR adoption curve. Bill Sorrells, AeHN's Executive Director, has twelve years of healthcare IT experience, and is leading AeHN's launch of technical services – complimentary to those currently offered by our vendor partners, however, local to Alaska and priced attractively.

AeHN members can expect to be contacted in the coming weeks regarding where their organizations are in EHR adoption, implementation, and Meaningful Use. AeHN is poised to offer best practices support and has a trained

staff, with total combined healthcare/information technology experience of 60 years, available to ensure your organization succeeds in EHR implementation and use.

Technical services to be offered in early November include: EHR Readiness Assessment, Selecting an EHR/Contracting with Vendor, and Implementation Support / Practice Workflow Design. Future services planned include a Privacy & Security Risk Assessment, Training for certain EHRs and services to assist organizations toward reaching Meaningful Use. Eligible primary care practices and Critical Access/Rural Hospitals can use their incentive funding for these services, while other organizations can take advantage of very reasonable prices. Contact Executive Director Bill Sorrells, bill@ak-ehealth.org, or REC Director Jim Landon, jim@ak-ehealth.org for additional information.

HIE Advisory Groups Want You!

The Health Information Exchange (HIE) project is going very well and the pilot organizations are pleased with the richness of the data that is available and being exchanged. As we bring on organizations to the HIE, we want to reach out to members, patients, and community partners for your feedback. You are cordially invited to join one of our various AeHN advisory groups and committees.

Most groups and committees will meet virtually quarterly but others could meet more often. Committee members are asked to offer their thoughts, ideas, and experiences to help improve the HIE experience for both patients and medical professionals. Whether you are a patient, provider, nurse, health educator, or IT health professional we want you! Please e-mail joseph@ak-ehealth.org for additional information.

Well-known Radio Talk Show Host is Early EHR Adopter

Thad Woodard, MD, Alaska Center for Pediatrics, Host of Line 1 Your Health Connection

The roles were reversed when well-known radio interviewer, Dr. Thad Woodard, recently sat down with our editor and became the interviewee. An early adopter of electronic health records (EHRs), Dr. Woodard purchased his first system in 1996, and in 2005, upgraded to a more robust EHR, eClinical Works. When asked if he would ever consider going back to paper charts, he said, "Absolutely not! I couldn't imagine going back; although not perfect, EHRs have many more advantages than paper charts."

Woodard said that he thought the health information technology effort would happen a lot faster than it has. He noted that most clinics with EHRs are not reaping their full capability because they do not yet connect to other clinics, hospitals, labs, and pharmacies to allow smooth and timely exchange of data to providers at the point of care. As a member of the Alaska eHealth Network, he looks forward to becoming a part of the Alaska's Health Information Exchange system and eventually be able to link to the national system as well.

Dr. Woodard believes that EHRs are especially useful for their practice management systems- the billing, scheduling, and patient and physician communications. On the medical records side, he and his colleagues (one additional pediatrician and three nurse practitioners) have been able to customize their physical exam templates, to be "more user friendly than our previous brand."

One lesson Dr. Woodard has learned from his experience with two EHRs is that a knowledgeable and competent office administrator is critical to making the EHR transition and ongoing use successful. He is fortunate that his daughter fills that role at his clinic! "A good administrator, he said, can handle most of the issues that may come up, work with any technical support people, and be the liaison between the clinic and the EHR company."



Thad Woodard, MD reviews patient charts

As a member of AeHN's Alaska Regional Extension Center, the clinic has utilized the Center's federally subsidized services to help attain "meaningful use" standards and eligibility for federal incentive payments through the State's Medicaid Program. He is quite happy that the investment he has made in his clinic's EHR will actually provide some financial return in addition to the benefits of greater efficiencies and more

complete data upon which to prescribe effective treatment plans for his patients.

One example he gives of those efficiencies is having a patient's chart when needed. "There is NO problem finding a chart anymore, whereas before, it cost \$10 per chart to retrieve them." Another advantage, Dr. Woodard said, relates to the nationally recommended medical home model that requires EHRs to provide accurate and fast communications between all the parties involved in caring for the patient. Dr. Woodard recommends providers buy an integrated EHR that has both electronic medical records and a practice management system to be sure the two will work seamlessly together.

What does he like best about electronic health records? "They are very helpful in providing important medical information in real time in order to be able to offer our patients the best possible assessments and care. We now have more information quicker and faster about individual patients who are now being seen in many different clinics and hospitals. I look forward to the health information exchange to combine more complete data between clinics and other medical entities."

Excited about the future of health information technology, Dr. Woodard said, "it is inevitable that the systems will get better over time when the kinks are worked out, and then, healthcare outcomes should dramatically improve."

AeHN holds Inaugural Annual Meeting

AeHN's first annual meeting was held September 21 to a full house at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage. Open to the public, the meeting focused on the progress made to date on several initiatives aimed at furthering the organization's mission of building a connected health care system in Alaska to improve health outcomes for its residents statewide. The three

primary projects that AeHN is managing are all moving forward on schedule: Health Information Exchange; Regional Extension Center; and the FCC Pilot Project. Invited media followed up with excellent interviews that aired statewide; check them out at www.ak-ehealth.org, under Upcoming AeHN Events, Alaska eHealth Network in the News.



AeHN holds Inaugural Annual Meeting this September at the Hotel Captain Cook. L to R: Board members Alex Spector, Tom Nighswander, MD, and President Paul Sherry



PRSTD STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ANCHORAGE, AK
PERMIT NO. 69

PMB 1143, 2440 E. Tudor Rd | Anchorage, AK 99507
Phone: 866-966-9030 | www.ak-ehealth.org

Q & A: AeHN Health Information Exchange (HIE)

By Joseph Furrer, AeHN HIE Director

What model type is the AeHN HIE?

It is a hybrid model where data is pushed to a centralized data repository from each participating organization.

What will be the cost to my organization?

Access to the HIE comes as a benefit when joining AeHN.

Will my organization have to purchase hardware or software in order to exchange data?

The AeHN HIE is Software as a Service Solution and does not require investment in hardware or software. However, those organizations wishing to share images from a PACS server would need an additional server.

What type of information is shared within the exchange?

Information such as: allergies, laboratory and imaging results, encounters, problem lists, etc.

What types of notifications are available to providers?

Patient Admission, Patient Discharge, New Laboratory and Radiology Results, Final Microbiology, and Patient admission to the ER.

How will these notifications be delivered?

Providers will choose which type notifications and delivery method (Fax, Phone, E-Mail).

Is secure messaging available?

Yes, provider to provider secure messaging is part of the solution. When the patient portal is completed secure messaging between provider and patient will be possible.

Can information from the exchange be pushed to my electronic medical record (EMR)?

Yes, if your EMR has the capability to accept continuity of care documents.

If a patient that we do not have a relationship with presents in our ER, is it possible to view information on him/her?

A “break the glass” capability exists for providers providing care of patients under emergency conditions that enables the entire continuity of care document for viewing. Each instance will be audited.